

WE NEED RAIN---NOW!!!

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As our 2022 seasons transitioned from late winter to spring, our surrounding yard areas required early season attention. After these early touchups, it became evident our well-worn mower was ready for replacement. In early May we assumed periodic rains would produce the need for mowing. Some investigation indicated we might choose to move to battery powered heavy-duty equipment this time. An order was placed, replacement arrived and it still remains "ready and waiting." Our expectations for rainfall have been left wanting, becoming desperate as the weeks come and go. It is as if from then until now a rare dark cloud passes our way overhead and finds our readiness and waiting mockingly laughable. We have even heard thunder a time or two. But, alas, it is anything but a joke! The drought deepens weekly and the stressors abound.

In this week of writing, Jacob's well in Wimberly has gone dry for only the fourth time ever. This caps a series of reports from friends, family and correspondents about worrisome images across our Texas Hill Country. Images of riverbeds gone dry and looking more like an empty roadway bed; little pools of water with desperate fish, some the threatened Guadalupe bass; stories of stranded docks and boat launchings. Others have called attention to the frailty of wildlife and the super crowded influx of livestock going to auction. We have even had a nearby wildfire scare that left scorched acreage as a caution. My most haunting image comes from my marvelous wife of 59 years and friend for 66 describing a 1950's trip with younger siblings on the train from the verdant green stretches of the Midwest through a long stretch of Texas where her Comal County grandparents and aunt met them at the downtown New Braunfels depot. She said the deeper they came into Texas, the drier the landscape with occasional frightful sightings of emaciated cattle. Peering from the train windows or landings where you could look out between coaches back then, the savaging of Texas by deep drought cried out! Today along with the images of wildfires even nearby gives one shivers.

The ominous signs of these periodic droughts, especially noting records that show the recent recordings of severe precipitation deprivation clustering in our recent decades gives one pause. I know there are those insistent that we cannot have conversation using "global warming" or "climate change" without creating division. So, let's just allow the circumstances to shake us into some reality thinking and reflection.

It would seem a "no brainer" that those among us in Comal County and neighbors of the Texas Hill Country working to protect and set aside "green" acres in conservation protection are about a good thing. As the aquifers strain to provide, such efforts above recharge areas seem urgent. Likewise, isn't it a considerable shortsightedness to have "stages for conservation" with our water supplies as these stressful periods are notably more frequent? It is high time for policy revisions. In a state so dependent upon underground water resources, the time has come for policy that establishes scientific oversight as well.

A recent revisit of my TEXAS WATER ATLAS proved instructive. An update in projections of population growth bringing water "takes" at more rapid rates is needed to note the exponential growth in our Texas Hill Country and "along the corridor." Our withering summer sounds the alarms.

Yes, friends, conserve, landscape in drought hardy ways and make provision to capture rainwaters. The time to “do water” responsibly is now! Resources are readily accessible at www.comalconservation.org and our excellent local libraries.